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ABSTRACT

The most important issue facing the people of the United States is education. National reports have defined the problem. The need for reform can no longer be questioned. A solution must be devised and New Jersey is reqdy to act. As Governor, the author offers several proposals for restoring the vigor of the state's schools. Each district will formally define its needs, declare its goals, and show how it will get results. The reorganized department of education will help the districts find solutions. State and local responsibilities will be balanced through planning and monitoring; the monitoring system will concentrate on districts that really need help. As the school environment is improved and standards are set for students' classroom behavior, standards for academic achievement can be raised. A new, tougher statewide graduation test has been established. High standards must also apply to bilingual students. If students cannot show competency in English, they will not get a New Jersey diploma. The quality of New Jersey teachers and school administrators must be upgraded. Ways to better use the state's talented and trained teachers and to bring a wider range of talented and skilled people into the schools must be found. To attract highly qualified individuals, starting salaries must be increased. To improve professional development programs for teachers, New Jersey should establish an academy for the advancement of teaching and management. Finally, the state should establish a master teacher program because extraordinary teachers deserve extraordinary compensation. (RH)

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EDUCATION IN NEW JERSEY:
A BLUEPRINT FOR REFORM

GOVERNOR THOMAS H. KEAN

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SPEECH BEFORE A JOINT SESSION OF THE LEGISLATURE
SEPTEMBER 6, 1983

EDUCATION IN NEW JERSEY: A BLUEPRINT FOR REFORM

AT TIMES IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY, ONE ISSUE BECOMES SO URGENT THAT WE IGNORE IT AT OUR OWN PERIL. TODAY THAT ISSUE IS EDUCATION.

THAT IS WHY, AS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, I HAVE CALLED YOU, THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE, INTO SESSION ON THE DAY BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR. I BELIEVE THAT THIS SINGLE PROBLEM, MORE THAN ANY OTHER, REQUIRES OUR COMPLETE ATTENTION AND JOINT EFFORT.

FOUR SEPARATE NATIONAL REPORTS HAVE DEFINED THE PROBLEM. IT IS OUR SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO DEVISE THE SOLUTION. IT IS TIME FOR ACTION. REFORMING OUR STATE'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM MAY WELL BE THE MOST IMPORTANT TASK OF MY ADMINISTRATION AND OF YOUR TERMS AS LEGISLATORS.

THE GAP BETWEEN OUR NEED FOR RIGOROUS SCHOOLING AND OUR ABILITY TO PROVIDE THAT SCHOOLING IS FAR TOO WIDE. WE KNOW, AS ONE NATIONAL REPORT PUT IT, THAT KNOWLEDGE IS POWER, THAT TRAINED INTELLIGENCE IS A CHIEF COMPONENT OF A NATION'S PRODUCTIVITY, OF ITS ABILITY TO INNOVATE, AND OF ITS GENERAL ECONOMIC HEALTH.

AS A NATION, WE CANNOT TAKE FOR GRANTED AMERICAN PREEMINENCE IN THE WORLD ECONOMY. RIGHT NOW, THE DOLLAR IS STRONG. IT WILL ONLY REMAIN AS STRONG AS THE PEOPLE WHOSE TIME, TALENT AND ENERGY IT REPRESENTS.

AS A STATE, WE HAVE SEEN THE DRAMATIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE ECONOMY'S SHIFT FROM OLDER INDUSTRIES TO HIGH TECHNOLOGY. WE HAVE ALREADY PUT $10 MILLION INTO UPGRADING NEW JERSEY'S TECHNOLOGICAL FACILITIES TO BRING NEW JOBS INTO THE STATE, AT THE RECOMMENDATION OF MY COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

BUT UPGRADED FACILITIES AND THE JOBS WHICH THEY ATTRACT WILL GO TO SKILLED WORKERS. IF NEW JERSEY WANTS THOSE JOBS FOR HER CHILDREN AND DOES NOT WANT TO RAISE AN ENTIRE GENERATION OF DISLOCATED WORKERS, WE HAVE GOT TO UPGRADE PUBLIC EDUCATION. IF WE DO NOT, THE EDUCATIONALLY DEPRIVED WILL BECOME THE ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED.

WE CAN NO LONGER QUESTION THE NEED FOR REFORM. YOU HAVE SEEN PROOF OF A FRIGHTENING DECLINE IN THE QUALITY OF AMERICAN EDUCATION COMPARED WITH THAT OF OTHER COUNTRIES. YOU HAVE READ THE REPORTS WHICH PROVE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN POOR EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION, ESPECIALLY IN A TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED WORLD. I WAS APPALLED TO LEARN AS A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH:

°THAT 13 PERCENT OF THE 17 YEAR-OLDS STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL ARE FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE.

° THAT 85 PERCENT CANNOT WRITE A PERSUASIVE STATEMENT ---- CANNOT

EXPRESS A WRITTEN OPINION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

THE IMPLICATIONS FOR A DEMOCRACY WHICH IS BASED ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND THOUGHT ARE TRULY TERRIFYING.

NOT ONLY ARE OUR CHILDREN'S ABILITIES BEING ECLIPSED BY ALMOST EVERY OTHER INDUSTRIAL NATION, THEY ARE FALLING BEHIND THOSE OF THE GENERATION BEFORE THEM. WE ARE IN DANGER OF GRADUATING THE FIRST GENERATION OF AMERICANS LESS PREPARED THAN THEIR PARENTS.

IT IS TIME TO ACT. IN NEW JERSEY, WE ARE READY TO GO. I HAVE SEVERAL PROPOSALS FOR RESTORING THE VIGOR OF NEW JERSEY'S SCHOOLS. THEY ARE NEW JERSEY'S BLUEPRINT FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM.

WE MUST NOT WASTE OUR TIME OR RESOURCES. NEW JERSEY HAS A STRONG TRADITION OF LOCAL CONTROL IN EDUCATION WHICH I RESPECT. AT THE SAME TIME, STATE GOVERNMENT HAS A CLEARLY DEFINED, CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO GIVE CHILDREN IN OUR STATE ACCESS TO "A THOROUGH AND EFFICIENT SYSTEM OF FREE PUBLIC SCHOOLS."

THIS YEAR, NEW JERSEY WILL SPEND ABOUT $5 BILLION ON PUBLIC EDUCATION. TWO BILLION DOLLARS - 40 PERCENT - COME FROM THE STATE, UP FROM 26.2 PERCENT ONLY TEN YEARS AGO. NEW JERSEY TAXPAYERS NOW RANK THIRD IN THE COUNTRY IN THE AMOUNT THEY SPEND TO EDUCATE THEIR CHILDREN. NEVERTHELESS, OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS, THERE HAS BEEN A PRECIPITOUS DECLINE ON BOTH THE VERBAL AND MATHEMATICS SECTIONS OF THE SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST.

I BELIEVE THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR DIRECTING THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS RESTS SQUARELY ON STATE GOVERNMENT, BUT I EXPECT LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN SETTING THEIR OWN OBJECTIVES AND DECIDING ON THE RESULTS THEY WANT TO ACHIEVE. EVERY DISTRICT HAS ITS OWN NEEDS AND GOAL. THEREFORE, I WILL ASK EACH DISTRICT TO DEFINE FORMALLY ITS NEEDS, TO DECLARE ITS GOALS AND TO SHOW HOW IT WILL GET RESULTS. EACH DISTRICT MUST DEFINE ITS OWN PATH TO EXCELLENCE. THE REORGANIZED DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WILL HELP THE DISTRICTS FIND SOLUTIONS.

WE WILL BALANCE STATE AND LOCAL RESPONSIBILITIES THROUGH PLANNING AND MONITORING. THE STATE WILL MEET ITS OBLIGATIONS BY MAKING SURE THAT EACH DISTRICT HAS TEN ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A SOUND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, RANGING FROM ACHIEVEMENT IN BASIC SKILLS TO STAFF DEVELOPMENT. WE WILL CHECK THE SCHOOLS' PERFORMANCE IN THESE CRUCIAL AREAS AND GRANT THEM CERTIFICATION ONLY WHEN THEY SHOW SATISFACTORY ACHIEVEMENT IN ALL TEN.

WE HAVE BEEN DESIGNING OUR MONITORING SYSTEM SO THAT WE CAN CONCENTRATE ON THE DISTRICTS WHICH REALLY NEED HELP. THE DISTRICTS THAT ARE DOING WELL WILL BE CERTIFIED FOR FIVE YEARS. THEY WILL BE FREE TO PURSUE THEIR EDUCATIONAL GOALS WITHOUT INTERFERENCE, USING THEIR PROVEN METHODS OF ENCOURAGING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. THIS WILL FREE OUR RESOURCES FOR AN INTENSIVE REVIEW OF THOSE DISTRICTS WHICH NEED THE MOST HELP. IT WILL ALLOW THE STATE TO FOCUS ITS ENERGY AND ATTENTION ON NEEDY OR DEFICIENT DISTRICTS. URBAN SCHOOL PROBLEMS, FOR INSTANCE, WILL FINALLY GET THE ATTENTION THEY DESERVE.

THIS IS A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN HOW THE STATE STRIKES A BALANCE BETWEEN ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AND LOCAL AUTONOMY. IT WILL CHANGE OUR ENTIRE APPROACH FROM MONITORING THE DISAPPOINTMENTS OF THE PAST TO PLANNING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE FUTURE. EXCELLENCE, NOT MEDIOCRITY, MUST BE OUR GOAL.

BUT EXCELLENCE WILL NEVER BE ACHIEVED UNLESS STANDARDS ARE RAISED.

AND BEFORE WE CAN TALK ABOUT ACADEMIC ISSUES, WE MUST ADDRESS STANDARDS FOR THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT. A DISRUPTIVE CHILD DOES NOT LEARN AND PREVENTS OTHER STUDENTS FROM LEARNING. DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM CAN STOP EVEN THE BEST TEACHER FROM DOING HIS OR HER JOB. WE MUST NOT ALLOW THE POLLUTION OF OUR CLASSROOMS BY NOISE OR VIOLENCE.

UNDISCIPLINED AND DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO DEPRIVE OTHER CHILDREN OF THEIR RIGHT TO LEARN. BOARDS OF EDUCATION, ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS MUST MAKE AND ENFORCE DISCIPLINE CODES AND MUST STATE OPENLY THEIR POLICIES ON HOW TO COPE WITH DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS. I HAVE ASKED COMMISSIONER COOPERMAN TO WORK OUT SOME OF THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE DISTRICTS, AND I ASK THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO CONSIDER ITS OWN POLICY ON DISCIPLINE.

THERE ARE MANY DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS WHICH ARE ALREADY ADDRESSED BY LAWS AND STATUTES. I ASK THE SCHOOLS TO ENFORCE THOSE RULES AS WELL AS TEACH THEIR STUDENTS ABOUT THE DAMAGE DONE BY SUCH DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR AS DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE. THE SCHOOLS MUST BE MORE ACTIVE IN IDENTIFYING CHILDREN WHO NEED HELP AND PUTTING THEM IN TOUCH WITH PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP THEM. I ASK EACH DISTRICT TO CLARIFY HOW IT WILL DO THIS.

AS WE IMPROVE THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND SET STANDARDS FOR CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR, WE CAN RAISE STANDARDS FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.

AS WITH STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR, WHEN WE EXPECT LITTLE OF OUR CHILDREN IN ACADEMICS, THEY WILL ACHIEVE LITTLE. FOR TOO LONG, WE HAVE BEEN TYRANNIZED BY MINIMUMS, DICTATED BY THE LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR. YESTERDAY'S MINIMUM IS NO LONGER ENOUGH. AS THE TASK FORCE ON EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH CONCLUDED, "PEOPLE WHO HAVE ONLY TODAY'S BASIC SKILLS OR LESS THAN TODAY'S BASICS WILL BE CONSIGNED TO ECONOMIC STAGNATION." IN OTHER WORDS, A CHILD WHOSE ONLY ACHIEVEMENT IS TO PASS A MINIMUM BASIC SKILLS TEST IN 1983 WILL NOT BE ABLE TO FIND A DECENT JOB IN 1993.

FOR THAT REASON, WE ARE DROPPING TESTS GEARED TO MINIMUMS. WE HAVE A NEW STATEWIDE GRADUATION TEST WHICH IS TOUGHER THAN ITS FLABBY PREDECESSOR. IT WILL BE BACKED BY VALIDATED ACHIEVEMENT TEST --- CHOSEN BY THE DISTRICTS --- IN GRADES THREE AND SIX. IT WILL INCLUDE A TEST OF WRITTEN ENGLISH. HOW CAN WE AWARD A DIPLOMA TO A STUDENT WHO CANNOT WRITE A PARAGRAPH OF COHERENT, LITERATE ENGLISH? HOW CAN WE CERTIFY TO AN EMPLOYER THROUGH A STATE DIPLOMA, THAT SUCH A STUDENT IS COMPETENT?

THE SAME HIGH STANDARDS THAT WE APPLY TO ALL OF OUR STUDENTS MUST APPLY TO OUR BILINGUAL STUDENTS. BILINGUAL STUDENTS FACE TWO CHALLENGES: THEY MUST GAIN FLUENCY IN ENGLISH AND THEY MUST LEARN TO PERFORM BASIC SKILLS IN ENGLISH.

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT BILINGUAL STUDENTS WHO ENTER OUR SCHOOLS BEFORE THE NINTH GRADE HAVE TIME TO MASTER BOTH TASKS. THEREFORE, THEY WILL HAVE TO PASS THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION TEST IN ENGLISH. IF THEY FAIL THAT TEST, THEY MAY TAKE A SPECIAL REVIEW ASSESSMENT, AGAIN IN ENGLISH.

BILINGUAL STUDENTS ENTERING OUR SCHOOLS AFTER THE NINTH GRADE WILL TAKE THE TEST IN ENGLISH ALSO. HOWEVER, IF THESE STUDENTS FAIL THE REGULAR GRADUATION TEST, THEY MAY TAKE THE SPECIAL REVIEW ASSESSMENT IN THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE. THESE STUDENTS MUST, HOWEVER, DEMONSTRATE FLUENCY IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ON A SEPARATE, STATE-APPROVED TEST. THIS REQUIREMENT STEMS FROM MY STRONG CONVICTION THAT A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA AWARDED BY THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY IS A CERTIFICATION OF COMPETENCE.

WE ARE SAYING TO COLLEGES AND EMPLOYERS: "WE CERTIFY THAT THIS STUDENT HAS MASTERED CERTAIN SKILLS. FLUENCY IN ENGLISH IS ONE OF THOSE SKILLS." I WILL ASK THE STATE BOARD IN OCTOBER TO MAKE THIS A STATEWIDE POLICY. THERE ARE FEW RESPECTED, WELL-PAYING JOBS IN OUR SOCIETY WHICH DO NO REQUIRE A MASTERY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. OUR SCHOOLS MUST GIVE OUR CHILDREN THE ABILITY TO COMPETE FOR THESE JOBS.

OUR PEOPLE IN THIS GREAT STATE BEAR MANY PROUD HERITAGES. BUT, FUNDAMENTAL TO THE VIGOR OF OUR DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMY ARE A SHARED COMMON CULTURE AND A COMMON NATIONAL IDENTITY. ENGLISH IS THE LANGUAGE OF THE COMMON GROUND. EVERY STUDENT IN NEW JERSEY WILL NEED TO BE ABLE TO USE THAT LANGUAGE IN ITS SPOKEN AND WRITTEN FORMS, EITHER IN COLLEGE OR THE WORKPLACE. THEREFORE, IF HE OR SHE CANNOT SHOW COMPETENCY IN ENGLISH, HE OR SHE WILL NOT GET A NEW JERSEY DIPLOMA.

I HAVE SPOKEN ABOUT RAISING STANDARDS FOR OUR STUDENTS. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT WE MUST RAISE STANDARDS FOR OUR TEACHERS. THEY ARE THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN IN EDUCATION. THEY ARE OUR MOST IMPORTANT RESOURCES. WE ARE BLESSED IN NEW JERSEY WITH MANY GOOD AND TALENTED TEACHERS. THEY SHOULD HAVE OUR RESPECT, OUR ADMIRATION AND OUR FULL SUPPORT.

I BELIEVE THAT THE TEACHER IS AT THE BASIS OF ALL EDUCATION. THAT IS WHY I AM SO TROUBLED BY EVIDENCE THAT THE CLASSROOM IS NO LONGER ATTRACTING THE BRIGHTEST AND THE BEST. THAT MEN AND WOMEN OF LEARNING AND COMPETENCE ARE TURNING IN EVER GREATER NUMBERS TO OTHER PROFESSIONS.

IN RAISING STANDARDS, WE MUST CONSIDER ALL ASPECTS OF THE ISSUE: PAY, JOB SECURITY, AND CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS WHICH ENHANCE PROFESSIONALISM AND SELF-ESTEEM. IN ALL THESE AREAS, WE MUST RAISE THE BAR FOR OUR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS.

AN INITIAL STEP TAKEN THIS YEAR WAS TO CHANGE THE RULES BY WHICH TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATORS EARN SENIORITY. NOW SENIORITY WILL BE EARNED ONLY IN SUBJECT AREAS OR GRADE LEVELS ACTUALLY TAUGHT. TEACHERS WITH NO EXPERIENCE IN A PARTICULAR SUBJECT AREA CAN NO LONGER "BUMP" YOUNG EXPERTS IN THEIR FIELDS. YOUNGER TEACHERS WILL GAIN JOB SECURITY, WHILE OUR STUDENTS GAIN FROM STUDYING WITH TEACHERS EXPERIENCED IN THEIR FIELDS. THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHOWED ITS INTEGRITY AND COURAGE BY APPROVING THIS RULE CHANGE.

WE ALSO NEED TO QUESTION HOW WE CERTIFY AND COMPENSATE OUR TEACHERS. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT WE ARE SUFFERING A CRISIS OF QUALITY IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION. TOO MANY OF OUR BEST TEACHERS ARE LEAVING THE PROFESSION FOR JOBS IN BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY.

AT THE SAME TIME, TOO MANY STUDENTS NOW ENROLLED IN TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS SCORE AT THE BOTTOM OF THEIR CLASSES ON MEASURES OF SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE ARE 24 POSSIBLE SUBJECTS A COLLEGE STUDENT CAN MAJOR IN NEW JERSEY. STUDENTS MAJORING IN EDUCATION SCORED 22ND IN BOTH THE MATH AND VERBAL SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST. STUDENTS MAJORING IN EDUCATION, OUR FUTURE TEACHERS, SCORED AN AVERAGE OF 32 POINTS LOWER THAN THE STATE AVERAGE ON THE MATH TEST. OUR FUTURE TEACHERS WERE 42 POINTS LOWER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE VERBAL SCORE AND 62 POINTS LOWER THAN THE AVERAGE MATH SCORE.

RIGHT NOW, MANY OF OUR STATE'S MATH AND SCIENCE TEACHERS TEACH WITH EMERGENCY, SUB-STANDARD CERTIFICATION. YET, WHILE THIS SITUATION EXISTS, TALENTED PEOPLE WHO MAJORED IN SUBJECTS OTHER THAN EDUCATION ARE PRECLUDED FROM BECOMING TEACHERS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS FOR THE SHORTAGE OF TALENT IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND IN TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS. MANY OF OUR MOST QUALIFIED TEACHERS ARE LEAVING. MANY OF OUR MOST QUALIFIED CITIZENS ARE NOT EVEN ENTERING. TRADITIONALLY, A TEACHING CAREER ATTRACTED MANY OUTSTANDING AND TALENTED WOMEN WHO BECAUSE OF THE PREJUDICES OF AN EARLIER AGE, FOUND OTHER FIELDS CLOSED TO THEM. WE CAN NO LONGER RELY ON SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION TO GIVE OUR SCHOOLS A TALENTED WORKFORCE: WE MUST SEEK MORE EQUITABLE WAYS TO DRAW OUR MOST INTELLIGENT CITIZENS BACK TO THE SCHOOLS.

THE WAY WE CERTIFY TEACHERS ACTIVELY DISCOURAGES TALENT FROM ENTERING THE PROFESSIONAL I SEE A GLARING NEED TO OPEN THE PROFESSION TO OTHERWISE HIGHLY QUALIFIED CANDIDATES WHO HAVE NOT TAKEN COURSES IN EDUCATION. FOR INSTANCE, THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE NOW TEACHING IN PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS WHO WOULD RATHER TEACH IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, BUT WILL NOT GO BACK TO COLLEGE TO TAKE EDUCATION COURSES WHICH THEY CONSIDER MEANINGLESS.

THERE ARE MANY OTHER TALENTED PEOPLE WHO HAVE VALUABLE KNOWLEDGE TO SHARE WITH OUR STUDENTS. HOWEVER, WE REQUIRE THEM TO QUIT THEIR PRESENT JOBS, TAKE EDUCATION COURSES AND PRACTICE-TEACHING, AND THEN COMPETE FOR A TEACHING JOB. THIS ASKS TOO MUCH. THERE SHOULD BE ANOTHER AVENUE BY WHICH TALENTED AND QUALIFIED PEOPLE COULD ENTER THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

WE DESPERATELY NEED TO DRAW ON A WIDER RANGE OF TALENTS AND SKILLS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SCHOOLS. TO ADDRESS THIS NEED --- TO OPEN UP THE TEACHING PROFESSION TO A WIDER RANGE OF TALENTED PEOPLE --- COMMISSIONER COOPERMAN WILL PRESENT A NEW CERTIFICATION PLAN TOMORROW TO THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

IT WILL REQUIRE FROM TEACHER CANDIDATES THREE THINGS:

1. A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE

2. PROVEN COMPETENCY IN THEIR SUBJECT AREA, TO BE SHOWN ON A STATE EXAMINATION

3. SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF A ONE-YEAR, SUPERVISED INTERNSHIP.

I FEEL VERY STRONGLY THAT THIS WILL BRING A BREATH OF FRESH AIR INTO THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS. IT WILL OFFER AN ALTERNATE ROUTE FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO TEACH BUT WHO DO NOT WANT A DEGREE IN EDUCATION, PREFERRING TO CONCENTRATE IN ANOTHER FIELD. IT DOES NOT --- AND I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THIS --- PREVENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS FROM HIRING CANDIDATES WHO HAVE MAJORED IN EDUCATION. BUT ALL CANDIDATES WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PASS THE COMPETENCY EXAM IN THE SUBJECT WHICH THEY PLAN TO TEACH, OR, IN THE CASE OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION, A TEST OF GENERAL COMPETENCY.

SOME DISTRICTS MAY PREFER TO HIRE CANDIDATES WITH A BACKGROUND OF EDUCATION COURSES, WHAT THIS STRUCTURE WILL DO IS ALLOW THE DISTRICTS A MUCH WIDER CHOICE IN HIRING TEACHERS, IT WILL ENLARGE THE TALENT POOL THAT EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT CAN PICK FROM IN CHOOSING THEIR NEW TEACHERS.

EVEN WITH THE REFORMS I HAVE DESCRIBED TO YOU, EVEN WITH CHANGES IN SENIORITY AND CERTIFICATION, MANY TALENTED PEOPLE WILL CONTINUE TO TURN DOWN TEACHING AS A CAREER. AS ALBERT SHANKER, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, WRITES, "YOU CAN'T RUN THE SCHOOLS WITH DEDICATED MISSIONARIES ANY LONGER." I AM NOT AMONG THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT WE CAN IMPROVE SCHOOLS WITHOUT MAKING A FURTHER COMMITMENT TO TEACHER SALARIES.

THE MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE STUDENTS WILL NOT BECOME TEACHERS WHEN THEY ARE OFFERED SALARIES WHICH ARE THREE-FIFTHS, IN SOMES CASES, WHAT THEY CAN EARN IN PRIVATE INDUSTRY. THERE ARE SOME OUTSTANDING CANDIDATES WHO CAN MAKE THAT SACRIFICE --- NOT MANY, WE SHOULD NOT FINANCIALLY PENALIZE THOSE WHO ARE WILLING TO SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE WITH OUR STATE'S CHILDREN.

IF WE ARE TO BRING YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE TEACHING PROFESSION, WE MUST INCREASE STARTING SALARIES FOR TEACHERS TO COMPETE WITH OTHER EMPLOYMENT AND WE MUST CREATE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT AND RECOGNITION WHICH TALENTED PEOPLE NEED.

WHEN OUR NEW CERTIFICATION STANDARDS ARE IN PLACE, I WILL PROPOSE THE FUNDS AS AN ITEM OF STATE AID FOR EDUCATION ---TO GUARANTEE A STARTING SALARY OF $18,500 A YEAR FOR EVERY BEGINNING TEACHER WHO MEETS OUR STANDARDS. THIS GUARANTEE ONLY APPLIES TO TEACHERS WHO MEET THE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS WHICH I HAVE OUTLINED.

FOR EVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT HIRES A NEW TEACHER, THE STATE WILL PAY THE DISTRICT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FIRST STEP ON ITS SALARY GUIDE AND $18,500. I WILL ASK YOU TO FUND THAT PROGRAM FOR FIVE YEARS, WITH THE STATE'S COMMITMENT GRADUALLY DECLINING FROM 100 PERCENT OF THE DIFFERENCE THE FIRST YEAR, TO 80 PERCENT THE SECOND YEAR, TO 60 PERCENT THE THIRD YEAR, 40 PERCENT THE FOURTH AND 20 PERCENT THE FIFTH. THE SAME SCALE WOULD DETERMINE THE STATE'S SUBSIDY FOR NEW TEACHERS HIRED OVER THE FOUR SUCCEEDING YEARS.

IN OTHER WORDS, IF A DISTRICT HIRES AN NEW TEACHER IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THE PROGRAM, THE STATE SUBSIDY WOULD BE 80 PERCENT OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN $18,500 AND THE FIRST STEP OF THE SALARY LADDER THAT YEAR. THE $18,500 FIGURE, HOWEVER, IS MY MINIMUM STARTING SALARY FOR NEW TEACHERS IN NEW JERSEY AND SHOULD BE INCREASED EACH YEAR IN STEP WITH THE COST OF LIVING.

I AM GREATLY CONCERNED THAT THE NEW MINIMUM STARTING SALARY FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS MIGHT CREATE AN IMBALANCE BETWEEN NEW TEACHERS AND THE MANY WELL-QUALIFIED TEACHERS NOW IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. AS I SAID BEFORE, WE MUST NOT PENALIZE THOSE WHO HAVE UNDERTAKEN THE TASK OF EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN. MY BUDGET PROPOSAL WILL INCLUDE FUNDS TO MAKE UP THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN $18,500 AND THE SALARIES OF THE TEACHERS ALREADY IN THE SCHOOLS, PROVIDED THEY PASS THE NEW STATEWIDE EXAMINATION.

WE ALSO NEED HIGHER STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR TEACHERS. TOO OFTEN TEACHERS GAIN GRADUATE CREDITS AND SALARY INCREASES FOR TAKING MEANINGLESS WEEKEND PSEUDO-COURSES. THIS METHOD OF GETTING SOMETHING FOR NOTHING DOES NOT SERVE OUR STUDENTS WELL --- IT DENIGRATES THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

I AM ALSO DETERMINED TO IMPROVE THE SENSE OF PROFESSIONALISM WITHIN OUR SCHOOL. PEOPLE NEED TO UPGRADE AND UPDATE THEIR SKILLS OVER TIME AND NEED THE CHALLENGE OF IMPROVING THEIR CAPABILITIES. ALL PROFESSIONALS WANT TO LEARN TO GROW. THEY WANT TO LEARN HOW TO TRANSFORM THEORY INTO PRACTICE, HOW TO DEVELOP THE SKILLS THEY HAVE NOW AND TO LEARN NEW ONES.

ACCORDINGLY, I PROPOSE THAT THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY ESTABLISH AN ACADEMY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING AND MANAGEMENT. THE PURPOSE OF THE ACADEMY WILL BE SIMPLE AND STRAIGHTFOWARD. TEACHERS WILL BE TAUGHT HOW TO IMPROVE THEIR TEACHING SKILLS AND MANAGERS WILL BE TAUGHT HOW TO BE BETTER MANAGERS. THE ACADEMY WILL FOCUS ON PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE LATEST RESEARCH FINDINGS.

EDUCATION IS A COMPLEX BUSINESS. THE ACADEMY WILL RECOGNIZE THAT FACT. TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS WILL BE ABLE TO SPEND A WEEK, SEVERAL WEEKS, OR A MONTH STUDYING EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS PRACTICES. I HAVE ASKED COMMISSIONER COOPERMAN TO DESIGN A PROPOSAL FOR SUCH AN ACADEMY AND SUBMIT IT TO ME.

FINALLY, I PROPOSE THAT WE ESTABLISH IN NEW JERSEY A MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM, TO BEGIN SEPTEMBER 1, 1984. IT WILL BE A PILOT PROGRAM AT FIRST, BECAUSE I WOULD REMIND YOU THAT WE ARE VENTURING INTO NEW WATERS. IN THE FIRST YEAR, FIVE SCHOOL DISTRICTS WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO NOMINATE UP TO 5 PERCENT OF THEIR TEACHERS FOR AN AWARD OF $5,000. THE TEACHERS WHO WIN THESE AWARDS WILL HAVE TO MEET THE MOST STRINGENT CRITERIA OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION. THEY MUST NOT ONLY EXCEED ALL COMMON STANDARDS OF THE TEACHER PROFESSION, BUT THEY MUST ALSO BE ABLE TO ACT AS MENTORS TO THEIR COLLEAGUES, HELPING TO TRAIN NEWER MEMBERS OF THE STAFF AND INSPIRING OTHERS TO FOLLOW THEIR LEAD.

I PROPOSE THIS, BECAUSE EXTRAORDINARY TEACHERS DESERVE EXTRAORDINARY COMPENSATION AND RECOGNITION. TO ATTAIN SUCH STATUS WILL BE A WORTHY OBJECTIVE FOR ALL ACHIEVERS IN THE PROFESSION.

I WILL APPOINT A GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON MASTER TEACHERS TO DESIGN THE DETAILS OF THIS PROGRAM, DRAWING FROM ALL THE COMMUNITIES WHICH I FEEL MUST TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION. THIS INCLUDES ALMOST EVERY SECTOR OF SOCIETY. I WILL CALL FIRST OF ALL ON MEMBERS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION. THEY MORE THAN ANYBODY ELSE KNOW THE QUALITIES OF A GREAT TEACHER. I WILL ALSO CALL ON MEMBERS OF LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS, PARENTS, ADMINISTRATORS AND MEMBERS OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY. THIS COMMISSION WILL BE CHARGED WITH FOUR IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES.

FIRST, THEY WILL ESTABLISH THE CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING THE MASTER TEACHERS. WHAT ARE THE SKILLS, ABILITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS THAT WE MOST PRIZE IN A TEACHER?

SECOND, THEY WILL SET UP A PROCEDURE FOR SELECTING MASTER TEACHERS. THIS IS A DELICATE PROCESS, WHICH MUST INCLUDE PEER REVIEW.

THIRD, THE COMMISSION WILL DEFINE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF OUR MASTER TEACHERS --- HOW THEY CAN HELP THEIR COLLEAGUES UPGRADE THEIR SKILLS AND HOW THEY CAN RAISE STANDARDS FOR THE SCHOOLS.

FOURTH, THEY WILL DETERMINE THE CRITERIA BY WHICH THE INITIAL DISTRICTS WILL BE SELECTED.

I NEED THE HELP OF THE LEGISLATURE TO SET UP THIS PROGRAM. I WILL SUBMIT TO YOU LEGISLATION TO IMPLEMENT THIS PROPOSAL, AND I ASK FOR YOUR HEARTY SUPPORT IN GIVING NEW JERSEY A MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM.

I WILL ASK THE COMMISSION TO REPORT TO COMMISSIONER COOPERMAN NO LATER THAN JANUARY 15, 1984. I INTENT TO SUBMIT THE FULL PLAN, WITH ALL THE DETAILS FOR IMPLEMENTING IT, TO YOU, THE LEGISLATURE, BY FEBRUARY 15, 1984.

THE INITIAL PROGRAM WILL BE A PILOT AND PARTICIPATION WILL BE STRICTLY VOLUNTARY. I HOPE TO INCREASE IT DURING THE SECOND YEAR TO INCLUDE AS MANY AS 20 DISTRICTS.

THIS PARTICULAR PROGRAM REFLECTS MY VERY STRONG BELIEF THAT WHILE STARTING COMPENSATION IS A CRUCIAL FIRST STEP IN ATTRACTING HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS, IT TAKES MORE THAN MONEY TO KEEP ENERGETIC AND TALENTED PEOPLE IN A PROFESSION. THERE ARE MANY REWARDS IN TEACHING WHICH HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH MONEY. THE EXCITEMENT OF SETTING YOUNG MINDS ALIGHT WITH KNOWLEDGE IS A PRIVILEGE IN ITSELF. BUT THE OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL WHOM WE SEEK TO KEEP IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS NEED GOALS, NEED INCENTIVES, NEED RECOGNITION FOR WHICH TO AIM, AS DO ALL OTHER PROFESSIONALS. I THINK THAT MY PROPOSALS ADDRESS THEIR NEEDS ON ALL FRONTS.

I HAVE GIVEN YOU MY BLUEPRINT FOR REFORM. NOW, YOU MUST TAKE A STAND --- WE MUST ALL TAKE A STAND --- ON EDUCATION AND ITS IMPORTANCE AS A CORNERSTONE OF OUR SOCIETY AND ECONOMY. I ASK YOU TO SEIZE THE

OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED TO US NOW TO IMPROVE OUR SYSTEM OF FREE PUBLIC EDUCATION BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE.

THIS IS AN EXCITING TIME FOR EDUCATION IN AMERICA. I WANT NEW JERSEY TO BE AMONG THE FIRST STATES TO ANSWER THE NATIONWIDE CALL FOR REFORM. THE PROGRAMS I OUTLINED TODAY REPRESENT MY OWN POWERFUL COMMITMENT TO UNIVERSAL EDUCATION. THEY ARE DESIGNED TO MEET NEW JERSEY'S NEEDS. BUT I HAVE NO MONOPOLY ON THE CORRECT RESPONSE TO A NATIONWIDE EMERGENCY. I WILL WELCOME YOUR SUGGESTIONS AND PROPOSALS. THE ONE THING I WILL NOT TOLERATE IS INDIFFERENCE OR A DENIAL THAT OUR EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS EXIST.

THIS PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN CULLED FROM MANY REPORTS --- DISTILLED FROM THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF MANY NATIONAL LEADERS. I HAVE SPOKEN WITH OTHER GOVERNORS, LEGISLATORS, PARENTS, TEACHERS AND SCHOOL BOARD OFFICIALS, AND I HAVE BEEN ADVISED THROUGHOUT BY OUR OWN COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION. THESE REFORMS, IF IMPLEMENTED, WILL LAST LONG AFTER MY TIME AS GOVERNOR AND YOURS AS LEGISLATORS, BECAUSE OF THEIR IMPACT ON THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN.

WE ARE SAYING NO LESS THAN THAT OUR WELL-BEING AS A NATION DEPENDS ON OUR CHILDREN AND WE ARE SAYING THAT THE WELL-BEING OF OUR CHILDREN DEPENDS ON EDUCATION.

I ASK THE LEGISLATURE, THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE LOCAL BOARDS, OUR TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE TO JOIN ME IN REAFFIRMING THE MISSION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL: TO ASSURE EQUAL ACCESS FOR EVERY CHILD TO A SOUND EDUCATION AND THUS TO A DECENT JOB. THE TWO CANNOT BE SEPARATED. IF WE WANT OUR CHILDREN TO BE ABLE TO LIVE AS PRODUCTIVE, PARTICIPATING CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS OF OUR DEMOCRACY, WE MUST TAKE ACTION NOW.

THIS WILL REQUIRE COURAGE, PATIENCE AND CAREFUL THOUGHT, WHICH THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION HAS ALREADY SHOWN IN APPROVING THE SENIORITY REGULATIONS. I INVITE THE LEGISLATURE TO JOIN ME IN THIS PROGRAM OF REFORM. LET US GO TO THE PEOPLE, EXPLAIN THE SITUATION AND ASK THEM TO HELP US DO WHAT IS RIGHT FOR CHILDREN. WE MUST ENLIST THEIR SUPPORT IN DEFINING THE PRIORITIES OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND ITS PIVOTAL ROLE IN BRINGING OUR CHILDREN SAFE, REWARDING JOBS. OUR FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT.

THANK YOU.